

THIS YEAR'S PAPER

MASS ART

May 21, 1969

The Poignant Tribulations of a Mass. Art Paper Editor

QUESTION: Whom are we trying to reach, and with what? This ominous mass is made of Individuals who "exist" to varying degrees; is there a common denominator that we can discover and use as a vehicle with which to establish possible Meaning? (.....How do you find the Pulse of a student body?)

QUESTION: Who is John Q. Art-oriented? Does he really want to read about a former president of his college, or about the synthesis of art and science (of everything)? Is there a way we could present this president of this synthesis that would cause old John Q. to read on in spite of himself?

QUESTION: Do we print the average, valid but not mesmerizingly exciting work, hoping to strike a representative median? Or do we print the Exceptional work? (What is Exceptional; by whose standards do we judge it to be Exceptional?)

QUESTION: Who do we think we are?

Over the past year, Mass. Art has been fortunate in having a whole bevy of heroes visit it. The list has been staggering, from Elma Lewis to Jack Nolan, whose "presence" as a guest has grown into "omnipresence" as next year's college president.

The well publicized and relatively well attended panel discussion with Sam Hunter, Jack Nolan, Jack Burnham, Rudolph Arnheim and William Bagnall was unfortunately not structured so as to allow a real interplay among the five illustrious egos. The audience didn't have the opportunity to hear, for instance, Jack Burnham refer to Rudolph Arnheim as the "Big Daddy of Design", as a few of us did several days later. It seemed as though there was sort of a Gentleman's Agreement at work, because anyone familiar with each man's ideas could find in their enormous differences friction enough for good flying conversational sparks. Their discussion sacrificed possible controversy and clashing theories for a sometimes informative, but basically tame afternoon.

The smaller scaled discussions with such people as Les Levine and Dan Flavin afforded what should have been a more

direct, personal context for dialogue, but with a few steadfast exceptions, Mass. Art students are too much in awe of the Art Forum based Star Quality of these men to allow some intelligible contributions to escape from their gaping mouths. It is a fact that Les Levine does not have a natural affinity for public speaking. He does, however, respond well when he senses a warm attitude towards him from his audience. The atmosphere during his talk was tomb-like. Les Levine's art is absolutely not tomb-like. This did not come across to his listeners. For a man with the great humor to mock Gallery Importance (Impotence) by holding his exhibition in an empty lot on 57th Street, he seemed to many of us to be disappointingly flat. This is our fault, because we didn't have the courage to pry beyond Levine's Image into his realer humanity.

And oh what a stroke of genius it would have been for someone to have played the devil's advocate to Dan Flavin's self-appointed role as Lord High Executioner. How sickeningly complacent we were.

As for those hundreds who missed Jack Burnham's visit, there follows a summary of an interview with him, through which there may be gained some insight into his frighteningly possible ideas.

Jack Burnham's predictions are provocatively explosive, his manner lacks the serifs of formality usually found in a University Personality, but above all, he conveys a clear genuineness of character, the lack of which would make any other quality ineffectual.

He believes that the art school is dying. He admits that because of a "residual academic art impulse", accompanied by residual jobs, it may continue as a vocational training center of some sort. But in the sense that it cannot teach future students a real understanding of communication, Burnham places a tremendous emphasis. "It isn't technology; it isn't ecology. It's the relationship of human beings to human beings. . . . McLuhan talks about tribal cultures. I absolutely think he's right. We are going to become a tribal culture. Not tribal in the "African" sense, but tribal, totally integrated into the psychical and communications structure people make for themselves." The structure we now just barely sustain, Burnham feels, cannot last. "I think personally, the society is going to collapse. And it probably needs to collapse. Not wanting to be in the middle of a revolution, I'd rather see it collapse gently and with some preparation than with chaos."

As for Mass. Art specifically, Burnham spoke as if the advent of Jack Nolan might increase the school's longevity in somewhat the same manner as the transplant of a vital organ would do in a human body which was bound to die in any case eventually. He said, "Jack's conservative enough . . . liberal education, technical ability . . . to attract the Board of Trustees. But also he's open enough for you to reach him as a student. He is really hunting for ideas. I think he has ideas on his own, but he's willing to try things." And with sad-but-true accuracy Burnham added, "The thing about a school like Mass. College of Art is (that) the kids come in beautiful and uncorrupted, and they can be made into anything you want to make them into. You can always get new kids. Ruin a couple of thousand, help a couple. You don't ruin them, you just turn them off to art, turn them into stale minds. But the problem with society is intelligent people who keep their intelligence through their early twenties are so rare that if you get too many, say 1/2 of 1% too many, you might have a revolution." In the aftermath of such a revolution, it would be a sign of encouragement to see Jack Burnham, former Fellow at MIT's Center for Advanced Visual Studies, huddled over a typewriter, reconstructing.

Art and Science

Part I

Both psychologically and biologically the two great motivations of all living beings are the preservation of the self and the preservation of the species. (The first is naturally included in the second.) Man also has these same motivations, but on a higher level—preservation of the species, in man, is expanded to mean Creation in general. Man, in fact, is entrusted with the preservation of all species. All creation, then, is good because it fulfills man’s primary motivation.

The whole process of nature is one of Evolution, that is, Creation. But Creation in nature is a blind process of trial and error. In the end, it expresses a logic, but it is an acting logic (e.g. this species is not fit to survive because it has not survived) rather than a conceptual one (e.g. this species can’t survive because it has no means of obtaining food; therefore, there is no sense in trying the species at all).

Man’s logic is conceptual, and we therefore have the ability to consciously extend Evolution. And since our main motivation is Creation, and Evolution is Creation, we have the necessity to extend nature. Obviously, to do this we first have to understand nature, and we do through Science. Science is an expression of our need to create, just as Art and Mathematics are expressions of the same need.

Part II

“When the stars threw down their spears
And watered heaven with their tears
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?
Tyger, Tyger burning bright
In the forests of the night
What Immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

There can be no value judgement on a prime force. It exists and compels other things are judged in relation to it. In the same way, since nature is immortal, Science is often blamed for the problems of the world. Science showed us how to use the atom, and now we are capable of destroying the whole world. Of course, we are also capable of feeding the world. The point is that Science just creates—as nature creates. The results are often awful or terrible, but they can’t be evil because knowledge cannot be evil. Further, it is only that Science has not been pushed far enough in all its potential directions that makes it sometimes appear evil. Because although Science has given us the ability to destroy the world, it will also show us how absurd such an action would be. And it will show us more convincingly than any arbitrary moral code will show us; two countries at war may not share the same code of values but they both will accept scientific facts.

We have come to the point where ethics can be understood in terms of Science. What was once considered part of theology, then part of philosophy, is now part of Science. The same was true of psychology. What is now a science was once considered part of philosophy, and before that a part of religion (when the insane were exorcized of the devil).

It seems apparent that other studies, like art, will eventually be understood by Science. Many people refuse to believe this, thinking that by being scrutinized and understood, a thing will cease to exist. But this view is absurd. Understanding more about the moon, in fact, going there, and understanding more emotions, doesn’t mean that nobody likes to look at the moon poetically any more.

Again, since Science is involved in the creative drive in the form of understanding nature, and since our creations become a part of nature, Science must understand our creations, too. Then we can have a stronger base to work on.

Part III

We have to realize that Art and Science come from the same source and motivation, as do Mathematics, Music, and Literature. They are all expressions of our need to create—and it’s a matter of environment, and perhaps heredity, that makes us choose a specific expression of creativity. Realizing that we are all motivated by the same things, perhaps we will eventually all get together, and all branches of Creativity will merge.

—Elaine Luti

Thoughts

by David Hawkins

In reading the philosophies of Man throughout history, I think one is aware of the non-universal quality each one has when viewed through time and the individual. Would it not be best to leave philosophies unwritten, the creation only of the individual’s own consciousness of his own self? And yet, Man will continue to write philosophies for collective Mankind, trying—by force or otherwise—each part, each word, each phrase, until we find the fatal flaw which demands alteration or disuse. And as certain as we are to seek perfection, philosophically, for Mankind, so does this college seek to determine its borders, its direction, even its name. Much time has and will be spent by many to do this, for reasons of their own. I do not criticize their endeavors, for this college needs a definition of its direction. Whatever the purpose or reason for the college’s creation, we, as students, must live with or against it.

The college is created for the education of the student. Certainly it is not created for the purpose of giving the instructor a place to instruct, nor is it for an administrator to show his talents at administration. We can see that the instructor would have nothing to instruct, and the administrator...who or what would he administrate, without the student? The student, however, (though he benefits from a cooperative relation with the instructor and administrator) can educate himself within the college structure without the benefit of the other two. Why then is the individual student not allowed to totally define his own education, from the marking system (its existence or nonexistence, pass/fail or graded, verbal or written) to the academic structure (open seminars or planned classes, problem-oriented or self-direction, specific classes or self-structured learning). The argument is often that students do not have the ability to self-motivate, and will not seek to learn, nor will they learn if left to themselves. When will they learn to seek their own ways in the world if, at some time during their early lives they are not permitted, yes, pushed—into developing self-direction? Some will fail, most certainly, but for those who succeed, there is knowledge limited only by the individual’s self-directives and abilities. This has to be better than the present structure with its coddled student, buffered by paternalistic attitudes of administrators and some educators. And it might well remove all those students who don’t have the maturity necessary to be in this educational institution.

It is time for the student to have a strong control in the educational affairs of his life—in philosophy and in reality. There is a trend to this direction, but it is with strong reservation, and the student is not a direct force. The balance of power should be within the student’s hand, otherwise it would seem that what has been done is mere tokenism. The student today needs this kind of responsibility to abate the ignorance of dealing with the “establishment” systems outside the school’s administration and faculty. And it is time that these “establishment” systems lose, once and for all, their ignorance of the real student and his direction. This should be one of the goals of any philosophy written for this institution, at least where it deals with academic direction and structure.

CALVIN BURNETT

Mass. Art is a pretty closed community, by default if not by design. To get a bit of an opening, we (the eds.) decided to get some thoughts from someone who's not one of us lucky ones who are simply free to deplore the situation. Mr. Burnett happens to be in the situation of being a black person in America.

Mr. Burnett, there must be a lot of people who go to the Boston public schools who are "talented"; have they heard that there is a Mass. Art?

It's interesting that the Massachusetts College of Art doesn't draw from Boston. That is, people who live in Boston are much less likely to go to Mass. Art than those in the surrounding suburbs. One of the things wrong is that their school system is so terrible. And in the ghetto, of course, it's much worse. We have people here who are less talented but have other background. They may have people in the family who know that art exists, or they may know somebody who is a successful artist.

So you think that ghetto life in general is totally divorced from anything that "art" is?

Well, it's divorced from the rest of the population, so naturally it's divorced from art too.

Does it have an "art" of its own?

No, the thing about the ghetto is that it doesn't have anything. It has its own "life style", and it is a kind of culture. But the problem is that what it has of its own is thought to be bad automatically, just because it is its own.

What about mannerisms in talking or drawing or dancing or making music?

Maybe. But again, the idea is that unless it is recognized as being good, it is minimized, just because it isn't of the main culture. This is the whole idea of "Black is Beautiful."

Is the recognition of black culture as being "better than we thought" helping the situation?

It's improving, but it's a drop in the bucket sort of thing. And the little bits of improvement are so publicized that it's way out of relationship to the whole.

What about the welfare problem?

Terrible, terrible, terrible, terrible! Self-perpetuating—absolutely terrible—impossible!

With publicity of isolated "improved conditions", are we being distracted from increasing ghetto anger?

Of course. For instance, if a price rises, if there's inflation, then the welfare has not gone up that percentage, so that it must be worse. Speaking of out-of-date housing rents, I've talked to many people who have said, "Oh, I used to live in Roxbury, and it wasn't so bad." But when they lived there ten years ago, it wasn't so bad simply because any house, any physical thing that's not taken care of, deteriorates. So when the Temple Mishkan Tefila gave the building to Elma Lewis, big deal! What were they giving? They were giving a worn-out building rather than the great Mishkan Tefila that was once there, and they're building a much better one in Newton. Everything's bad, you see? And it's not only bad, it's getting worse automatically because time is passing.

Being an artist, do you feel you owe anything to the black community? Perhaps it's like my feeling that being a female I have to prove I can do anything anyone else can do.

Yes, you owe something to what you are. An individual is many things anyhow. I personally am a father, a son, a brother, and a husband. Now, am I four different people, am I the same person reacting, and do I talk the same to each person? The answer is no. I can't tell my daughter the same things I tell my wife. Yet I'm not being hypocritical or phoney, because it's a different situation. So—I think that I'm an American, but I'm a black American. Therefore, I owe something to my race, something to America; there's no great conflict. People seem to think there's got to be some great conflict in being able to do two or three things simultaneously; but here you are, listening, talking, looking, sitting, all at the same minute. To get back to the specific question: since I am what I am, I have to adjust myself, or adjust my time, to all the things I am. Not to do it is wrong.

You seem to be interested in this idea of the problems of blacks being similar to the problems of women. And Gunnar Myrdal brought this out succinctly in his extremely important work which came out in the forties, called *The American Dilemma*. Most people think of the Negro problem in America as one similar to various ethnic groups, but he said it is not. It is similar to the woman problem in Western civilization. Once somebody says this, you begin to understand all of the ramifications.

What is it, aside from an economic factor, that gives a liberal arts college like Brandeis or B.U. the momentum that makes them "good" colleges?

Maybe the economic factor is the whole problem. Money is very liberating. Let's assume that you're living in Boston and making \$12,000 a year, and you're living in Boston the next year making \$8,000. You're the same person. One year, though, you'll do something a little extra, and the next year you won't, just on the same basis. So, if Brandeis has a better paid faculty, then that faculty might be more interested in doing something with the amount of time they have left over. Also, you have to have facilities, which Brandeis has, you have to have a gallery...the fact that there are shows makes the students more aware of art.

Some of the students and professors of the better Ivy League schools have more time to be externally aware. They may come from families that have more books and records. That's a kind of Awareness...you have to stumble on it, you see?...So you realize, speaking of the ghetto again, that of the two public libraries in the Roxbury ghetto, one has a basketball court over it? So that when you go in there, all you hear is, "THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!"

Interview: Otis Philbrick

Otis Philbrick has been instructor, chairman of the Painting Department, and acting president at Mass. Art for the greater part of his life. He is now eighty years old, president of the Boston Printmakers, and very much alive and painting in Westwood, Mass. If the reader can stretch his attention’s longevity to finish the whole interview (several students have attested to the fact that they never read anything longer than one page) he will probably find it worthwhile.

Us: Is there hope for today’s Younger generation? Do you think they differ from any of history’s other Younger Generations?

Him: Well, of course they have to differ in order to be the same. That is, everything has changed, and their relations to things today are probably very much the same as in the past. Do you know that past in “Alice in Wonderland” when somebody says you have to run like the dickens in order to stay where you are? This is the same aboutthings changing. Things have to change in order to remain the same, to keep the same relations.

Us: So you think the relationship between the young people and their world today is the same as it was....

Him: Well, I don’t believe in this “Generation Gap”. I think it’s an invention to make somebody uncomfortable, particularly me. I think the young people can’t realize (and it’s a good thing they can’t) that in just a little while they’ll be old people. And I think the fact that they can’t realize it is what makes it nice for them. Otherwise, they’d be quite different from what they are. They’d be worried. Also, they’d be too conscious of what they have and that would spoil it.

Us: Then young people are just as ignorant as ever, except there’s more to be ignorant of, perhaps? .

Him: It’s a blissful ignorance; let’s call it that. And that’s a wonderful thing. People like Miro, for instance... he’s been able to keep that childish attitude, or maybe he’s rediscovered something, I don’t know.

Us: What do you have to say to the people who think that painting is dead?

Him: Of course, I would feel that I was dead too if that were true. And I think that the people who say that...well, perhaps they don’t need painting, and they don’t believe in painting. It’s easy to kill off something the way the Russians did the first thing when they started Communism, to kill off religion, to kill off God. That was a competitor of theirs. They didn’t want to leave the people free to say that God wouldn’t do this or wouldn’t do that, so they killed Him off. And I think there’s some of that in the people who say that art is dead. It leaves them free togo ahead and do what they want to. But that doesn’t mean it is dead. If it ever dies, I think a good deal of the world would die too. To me that’s a question that can be asked, but I don’t think it’s a very important question. Anyone who says that any important thing is dead is a little foolish about it. They have an ulterior motive I think always in saying that. If you want something dead, you want it for some personal reason.

Us: Since the arts are always testing their limits and breaking themselves down, that goes along with the general part of the structure of our life, testing its limits and breaking down. Do you think this is a trend? Will it lead to good change or just ashes?

Him: Oh, I think that most of the things will work out all right. I believe that things are going to last. We have no conception now of what’s going to happen in the future. Way out there are more worlds and beyond those more worlds and eventually, they’ll be part of life. We are just a little bit of something that’s tremendous, really. I think that it’s meant to be that way; that as soon as one thing is discovered, one horizon is pushed back, there is another beyond that, and beyond that there is another. The place where the most horizons will be pushed back is in the human mind. And no matter how far they go beyond the planets, and beyond those, and beyond those, just as long a distance is still in the human mind to go. You don’t do anything important without having it done in the mind, breaking down horizons in the mind. I have no fear of the world turning into ashes. As I try to answer these questions I know that tomorrow or tonight I’ll put myself to sleep trying to think of better answers. I really think often questions are more important than answers. That’s what I miss about teaching. I miss the questions that young people had that I couldn’t answer when they were asked, but perhaps after weeks I found some kind of answers to. That’s important to me. So that I never feel beaten or bad when I can’t answer a question because I know I’ll go on thinking about it. If I could answer it definitely and clearly and exactly right, I’d stop thinking about it. But the ones I can’t answer, those are the important ones.

Us: To whom do you think art should communicate?

Him: It’s there for those who can understand it, that’s all. I’ve always felt that there are a lot of people in the world who do not need art, people who live a kind of art. They are so active and so interested in life that they just don’t need (art). The old time pioneer, who was terribly excited and busy just trying to exist in the wilds (protect himself and find stuff to eat) and for whom just the weather was important, to him the sun and the moon and all the things that we try to use in our art were very real. He was living a kind of art....the more civilized we get, the more we need art. To me, art is not Nature; art is artificial. Art is something more or less to go indoors a good deal. You have it indoors. Art doesn’t really belong, except sculpture, outdoors. It belongs in the house. Because that kind of artificiality belongs inside. It might be that sometime there’ll be a kind of art for out of doors. It will have a kind of carrying power that can be seen at great distances. I’ve often wondered, when they used to have the Arts Festival in Boston on the Common, why they didn’t have one little catagory that was meant to be out of doors. But they never did...I don’t mean like billboards, although it might be something in that direction. Miro has made some things of ceramics which are something like paintings. I think he made a big wall of that sort of thing that would go out of doors. But it’s quite different from painting....What was the question? Now I’ve forgotten.

Us: To whom should art communicate. Actually, before that: should art communicate? Is it valuable if it doesn’t communicate?

Him: That, of course, is thebig question today. Art shouldn’t be a story. A story belongs in a book, and when you get through reading it, you can shut the cover

and think about it a little bit more. But art is something that is on the wall and stares you in the face all the time. If it were like a story that you had read and finished, you’d get awfully sick of it on the wall. It should have an open quality about it that questions things and each time you came to it, you found something new in it, something different, that you had to contribute to also. It’s becoming more abstract, really. That’s your question, isn’t it? Personally, I like good abstract art very much, but I haven’t given up liking traditional art too. I find if someone begins to run down traditional art, I start to defend it. And if they start to run down modern art, I start to defend that. So that I get hated by both sides. I’m in the middle. The traditional artists think I’m a traitor for liking modern art and the modern artists think I’m trying to horn in somewhere I don’t belong. I do think the middle of the road is a hard position to maintain, but it’s where most travelling is done, and where the fastest cars go. And it’s where you get if you want to pass another car. It’s a lot better than the gutter,which is where some of the art is today.

Us: What about conceptual art?

Him: You’ll have to define that term.

Us: Its feeling is that art as “objects” is too precious and insignificant in comparison to the ideas on which it is based. The idea becomes the “art”. For example, there’s a girl in the class who’s working with the mathematics of the arc, saying that the mathematical nature of the arc is more “artful” than the visual nature of it.

Him: I would have to see that before I could say what I thought about it. That’s something that was in your mind, for instance. You said it to me, and it might go into writing in a book, but if it were what you say plus some sort of design and probably color, and it was attractive or stimulating, or made me wonder about things (had a sense of wonder), why I’d accept it. Of course, there’s always been an argument about whether a thing that was useful would be art or not. It goes quite away toward defining art. Now, of course, mathematics is a very useful thing. Although, I’ve heard creative mathematicians talking and discussing among themselves, and I’ve noticed that they were never so happy as when they didn’t know what they were talking about. In other words, they experiment and begin to get into a fanciful realm, even in mathematics, and especially in mathematics. It is a kind of art. I think any answer to something about art has to be made on the basis of the painting, of seeing it there, of having it there to talk about. These theories are all right; I believe in talking about them. But I don’t believe in a kind of art that isn’t present. I myself am a little disturbed by art that you stumble over or that you bump into, or that doesn’t remain fairly reasonably flat of the wall. I know I’m cutting somebody’s throat, but to me it’s a little bothersome to have things that are meant to be paintings jut out into the room so that you trip over them. Although, Nevilson’s things I like very much. And Townley. But both of those have a very strong sense of order. Especially Nevilson’s things; they’re very orderly. I think that art has that as part of its province, so that when a person is a little bit disturbed and wants to be reasoned with or quieted down, if they can look at some sort of art that is orderly and reasonable, I think that helps them. But on the other hand, there are times when art should stir you up and excite you, or perhaps leave you a bit uneasy. What I mean is, there isn’t one narrow nitch art should be in. It’s a very broad subject. I’m not against any art that’s way, way out at all because I think, although it doesn’t amount to much itself, it does denote a kind of freedom that’s good. There’s always been, in any movement, a lunatic fringe. Religion had it more than art, really. Many religions have started with some very, very strong unusual tenant, some laws. Often they’ve given them up as they went along, like the Mormon religion, about having a hundred wives. That’s come down. Christian Science started out with very strong feelings against any kind of medicine and doctors at all, but they’ve simmered down a bit.

Us: Do you think that men are inherently better artists than women are, and why?

Him: Well, I remember once, about fourty years ago, when I used to give in the school auditorium a talk once a year. I got up and said that except for one very important thing, women are not as creative as men, and that important thing is here right now (ed. note: a baby). But I would change that now. Once in a while there’s been a woman artist that’s been very, very strong and able. I think that perhaps there’re not as many woman artists of the past as men. But that might have been social conditions, rather than creative abilities. I see nothing to stop a woman from being a really fine artist. I would take back what I said, although I didn’t get any trouble at that time. When I said it nobody put any glass in my food, or salt in my coffee or anything. They seemed to accept it; it was a more passive audience. I think if I got up now and said that, I’d have a little trouble. I hope that I’ve grown, too. I’ve said all kinds of things. I even made observations about colöred fingernails and lipstick, but I noticed that it didn’t have any influence on the use of colored fingernails and lipstick. I’ve never seen any reason for colored fingernails. I think the ends of fingers are wonderful the way they taper off into nothing. And suddenly to make them all accented and sharp is wrong. And lipstick... to me, it’s a kiss-repellent.

Us: What do you think the purpose of an art school should be?

Him: I think the answer to that is so obvious that it’s hard to answer, if you know what I mean. It’s hard to bring out anything new. I’ve been grateful that I went to art school, and I hope the ones that are going now will be grateful for it. I do think that the great genius doesn’t need art school. He’ll take care of himself. The genius is like a comet that burns through our atmospHERE and then is gone, and we don’t have anything to do with him. But I believe that much of the world’s important work is done not by the great genius, but by those who have been pretty good and go out into the world and try to practice the methods and ideals they learn in art school, or in any school. I remember Matisse said that after he’d been teaching a year, he gave up teaching because he found that he was expected to make lions out of rabbits, only to have them turn back into rabbits the moment his back was turned. I’m sure if he’d gone on teaching, he would have begun to believe that rabbits are important too. Certainly in the animal kingdom rabbits are more important than lions. They would be missed much more. I think that the near-great, not always the very-great, but the near-great are very important. They maintain a tourraine for the great to take off from. The mistakes of those who don’t quite make it are important. If you ever read the biography of the Wright Brothers, all the letters and so on, you’d find how much attention they paid to those others who were trying to make flying machines, and (how they) watched them and capitalized on their mistakes. Their mistakes were very important to the invention of the flying machine. So that we shouldn’t just measure an art school by the number of geniuses it turns out. I remember once when we had to go to the Statehouse to defend our school against inroads on its budget. The legislator asked what was the use of supporting an art school which only turned out a few very great artists. And I answered him by saying that I was quite sure that the ratio at our school of fairly good artists to good artists to geniuses would be about the same as the ratio of politicians to statesmen. And yet they still kept the Statehouse maintained... I really think art school is a very important thing.

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Us: Sometimes I wonder if they don't put too much emphasis on method and not enough on ideals.

Him: Well, of course, methods are the easiest things to teach. That's why, for instance, perspective is a fairly easy thing to teach, not to teach wonderfully, but to teach... because there are rules and things to go by. But it's awfully hard to teach art. In fact, some people claim that you cannot teach art. I think a teacher, in order to teach art well, has to get inside each one of his students, and help that student feel a confidence in his own way of working. And that's not an easy thing to do. In the first place, if a teacher goes from one student to another trying to do that, he's apt to lose his own importance, his own confidence in himself. But he can encourage the students in whatever direction he finds they are headed (if you can find that; sometimes you can't). I think that's the important thing in art teaching: to encourage the student to be himself or herself. That's very hard, because it's so easy for students to just imitate other painters and to imitate their teacher. I've seen school exhibitions which look like a one man show, and that one man is the teacher. I don't think that's good teaching. I think the thing that's important in art for all the world is each artist's different way of looking at the world, of trying to see the world. That's what we think about when we think of great artists of the past; we think of the artists often more than their paintings. We think of their natures, and what they have done for us has been tremendous. Each man himself is a single thing and he sees the world his own way, but he needs the way other people see the world. They've said that if every ordinary person, no matter how ordinary a life he'd lived, would write an honest, simple biography, it would be interesting reading. Because nobody is a total loss. Everybody has something interesting. And I think the artist is supposed to have something especially interesting for the world to understand, and a writer too, and a musician. To me that's the important thing, for an artist to search himself and give to the world his reactions, of how he sees, and how he feels, too (because art today is becoming very much a matter of feeling as well as seeing).

Us: What is Awareness?

Him: Well, there's all kinds of Awareness. Now, for instance, a wild animal has to be very aware of dangers in its surroundings. All its senses are supposed to be very alert in order to respond quickly. But I think what you mean is including the brain. Awareness, reaction to surroundings, not only physical surroundings, but people... and understanding, is that what you mean? It's a broad term, I'll admit, and it's a significant term. The fact that it's a little hard to define makes it broader and more open. To me, that's a very important thing, to keep things open. When I was your age, I knew everything. I said Yes and No and this and that were exactly this and that way. But I don't anymore. I say well, maybe, perhaps, or just plain I don't know. And I like it better that way; it's much deeper and the possibilities are greater. But I don't think you should be that way now. I think the young people should be definite. Even to make a wrong decision for a young person is better than to make no decision, because you can land on your feet; you're agile. When you get older, you can't afford to make wrong decisions. But the one thing about young people is that they're sure; they're definite. And that's wonderful. That's why they do things. As you get older, you'll round off the corners a little bit more, and you'll get tempered, and perhaps you'll fit into this ordinary old world a little easier. You won't make so much commotion, maybe. That sounds a little sad, but it isn't. Because being old is nice, especially watching the young people. It's something like the kittens we have. They go through all kinds of things. I'd die if I did what they did, but I get a kick out of watching them. So enjoy it while you can. When I look back on what I had, I feel a little sad that I didn't enjoy it more, that I didn't do more with it, the health and vitality and the dreams and everything.

Us: So you think perhaps that the young people should try to keep an awareness of what they think and what they want, but they shouldn't try for a general awareness, which comes from a person who's older and who is able to watch and take things easy, instead of being in there and laying down what you think is your law?

Him: Well, I don't know. I'm an old guy. I think I've said this before: I've been two or three times recently talking with young people. One of them will break in in the midst of a hot argument and say to me, "Well, I respect your age." And I say to him that that's something he cannot do. He cannot respect my age; he hasn't been through it, how can he? I respect your age. I've been through it. Not only that, but I've helped five children go through it and watched grandchildren go through it. So I can respect and understand it. But when young people say to me that they respect my age, I realize that's just their polite way of trying to set me aside while they go on with their arguments... which is all right too. (ed. note: Mr. Philbrick is speaking of the baby now.) No, just look at him. That's the greatest thing in the world, what's inside that conical shape, this container. It's better than any computer will ever be. For one thing, it'll always have a character. No matter what a computer does, good or bad, it doesn't get registered on its face like it does on a human face. That's what makes portraits interesting. ...

An artist has to be somewhat selfish, in a way. He's got to focus desires and his own ambitions. The world maybe in the future will profit by what he does. I think anybody living next to Van Gogh would have thought of him as a tramp or a nut, yet he has done a great deal for the world. It took two or three generations for that help to come. I've always believed that was an important kind of art. There've been artists like Rubens whose work was instantly understood and approved by the world, and that's good. But there've been other artists like Cezanne and Van Gogh, and even Rembrandt too, that took the world generations to understand. That was the kind of growth the world had, a kind of chemical change that took place slowly in the people, to understand those artists. I think that's more lasting and more important, because all the good of Rubens Rubens gave them immediately. They didn't have to work for it. The good of Rembrandt, Van Gogh, and Cezanne... the world had to do something to itself to understand and recognize. And that's good for the world.

Us: Even now, though, many people aren't willing to see anything in it. I remember going to the museum show of Old Dutch Masters and people were saying how lovely it was because they did ducks that really looked like ducks, and Rubens did his people that really looked like people, and wasn't that a beautiful garden and all that. But when they see other paintings, even things of Van Gogh and Cezanne, they think, "Uch, he couldn't paint a tree like a tree." So do you think that the world has really changed?

Him: There'll always be people who won't understand things that other people will understand. I think it'd be a terrible world if everybody was an artist, for instance, or could understand art... or if everybody was good even. I don't think that'd be a good world. If everybody was healthy and good and had plenty, what would become of sympathy and charity? It's good for people to try to make things better. And if the world was already better or best, that'd all go. We've got to always keep trying. There've always got to be things to work for and try for and do away with and overcome. Otherwise what would be the good? If a child were born into a world where there was nothing for him to improve, there'd be no sense in it.

Now, we have to have bad weather. I hope they never control the weather. We've got to have good weather, bad weather; we've got to have good people, bad people, tall people short people, black people, white people. There've got to be a few bad people for the rest of the people to try to make better. Otherwise, there'd be no sense in the world. It'd be just perfect. I made up my mind that in order to have perfection, you've got to know that perfection always includes imperfection. And that makes you understand things a little better. I said that once before and somebody said, "Well, what about the perfect moment? Isn't that perfection?" Of course the imperfection of the perfect moment is that it's soon gone. It's over. If the perfect moment continued, it wouldn't be a perfect moment; you'd get tired of it.

Us: I was going to get onto the subject of the mechanics of the school... it's getting late; it's not important.

Him: Well, school has always been important to me. But I have left it alone. I believe in it and I think it'll get along all right. Twice before this I've seen trouble where the president was dismissed summarily, that is, disgracefully, and yet the school got along fine.

Us: Did the school change much when it changed from an unaccredited school to an accredited college?

Him: It changed in a respect; it was Royal Bailey Farnum who got the degree for the college in 1925, and that gave the school a big boost on the map. It was I who changed the name from "Massachusetts School of Art" to "Massachusetts College of Art", and personally, I don't think that makes any difference. I really think what makes the school good or bad, as much as anything else, is the students. And next to that is the faculty and next to that is the president. I've been acting president twice and even then I said that the faculty was more important than the president. And I still believe that. Although the president is important too. But first of all, I'd put the students. The product of the school is what climbs down those stairs each June with a diploma.

Us: Have the students changed in their nature from when you were a student to as recently as you have been there?

Him: Oh, yes, of course they've changed. They have to change. But fundamentally, they're the same. I believe, whether a person is riding a prairie schooner or an airplane, that he still gets angry and ambitious and sad and happy and hungry very much the same way. I don't think that's any different. I think that process hasn't changed a bit; I hope it never does.

Us: Can you make a qualitative comparison between today's Mass. Art students and those who were admitted when you were a student?

Him: You are measuring the students that are in the school today, not by the students in the school of the past, but by those graduates who are now turned into artists or something. You see them the only way you can see students of the past, these people who have grown older and turned into something, maybe. You're measuring students of today against those and that isn't fair. I am the only student in my class, senior painting class, that is painting. But there were only six in that class.

Us: Aren't there quite a few students who go to art school to whom it doesn't mean anything more than an institutional shelter?

Him: That's true of any college. It should be less true of an art college, I'll admit. When I went to college I was considered kind of a nut in the neighborhood. Art wasn't a thing by which you could earn a living. It was a crazy thing to try to do. This was a country place. The moment I graduated and got a nice teaching job over in Cambridge, though, I was wonderful. I think there was one other student from my high school that went to art school, and it was a big high school, too, because Weymouth is a big town. Today I think a great many people are studying art. It's become more of a business. There are many things to provoke them, all the fine books on art, all the color reproductions. I never saw a good original oil painting until I went to art school. In fact, at the time, I even considered being a writer because I was more familiar with great masterpieces in writing than I could have been in art. But when I found that art took just as much intelligence and was a little closer to me anyway, I didn't seem to belong there, and that's true of any school. I don't think you should worry too much about other people. You should focus on yourself.

Us: But you can focus probably more efficiently on yourself outside of school. What justification can you see for being in school?

Him: I do think that students learn a great deal from each other. I think they learn as much from each other as they do from the faculty. Now, I'm not running down the faculty; I think the faculty would agree with that. The discussions you have in class, even while you're painting and the way you look at each other's work. Of course, you're not going just to that school. You're going to all the galleries in Boston and museums and all the books in the world...

Us: But they don't do that...

Him: No? Well...

Us: Are ceramics art?

Him: There used to be violent discussions between the ceramic group and the drawing and painting group as to whether ceramics is art or not. Because it was a useful thing it couldn't be art, they said. But then they went ahead and made it art. I think somebody like Bill Wyman has helped them to see that it is an art. He has been so creative with it. It's curious about ceramics; I'm quite sure the potter of the past, if he'd made a jug or a thing out of shape, he'd have thrown it on the heap.

Us: But the Japanese didn't. Thousands of years ago they had very irregular ones...lots of character...they were good.

Him: But today they do that on purpose. That's changing.

Us: It's too bad we didn't get to see Mr. Doucette as a teacher. He's a dean now. .

Him: Doucette was a very nice man. It's too bad. They shouldn't take these good things away from the students and make them into official administration. That's one thing about the school; it's getting top-heavy with administration. I don't think the faculty should get too mixed up in administration... takes them away from the students. Before, the faculty was nearer to the students than they were the president. That student and faculty relation, at the art school especially, was a very, very good thing. There were exceptions, but still, it was a nice thing. I don't think faculty should get mixed up in administration. It takes a different kind of mind for administration, and it spoils you for being a teacher. I understand it better than most people just accidentally, because I was with the faculty for years, and I was acting president for two years. Then I went back to the faculty for ten or fifteen years. Then I became acting president for another two years. Then I went back to teaching again. I could see it very clearly, the difference. The administration is another type of mind...I didn't like it. Teaching is much more satisfactory...much more satisfactory. You don't get as much notoriety, perhaps, but you get something else that you remember when you're old.

To Students of The World And The Paper of Mass. Art

From the breakfast table, 109 Marlboro, while attempting to identify me, today, here.
Breathing!

Chapter I

What is awareness?

Is it the mind conscious of things around? Is it verbal identification? A lion is not aware.

Is it the memory of the pictures and descriptions in last week's Time Magazine?

Is it observing that the lights flicker in Jordan Hall at 9:10 every evening?
Is it the sound of hummingbird's wings?

Does the exhilaration of love make one aware of love?
Is one aware during a dream of sleep?
How can I be aware of you or me?

On TV I saw a bomb explode, bodies disintegrate. DEATH!
I am not aware of death. I am alive.

If I was drowned and was resusitated, would I be aware of life?

What is awareness?

Chapter II

Think of awareness for one minute without another thought!
Do not let any other thought come into your mind for that minute.

Of what is one aware? Everything that touches the senses at the immediate moment? My dog is hungry.

Take a drug which relaxes the mind and stimulates sensuous perception. Has one then more acute awareness? Is gold then brighter? Is it worth more?

Why be aware? Would not one be happier with less awareness or none? Is the ignorant most happy? Who is most happy? Buddha, Smith, or Thoreau? I laugh a lot.

Chapter III

We say that we are artists. We have highly trained and developed visual attitudes. Are we aware of God? Can we be sure that God is or isn't? What can we reply to "God is dead."?

2.

Blue is blue as the sky is the color of the lake but the Chinese paint it black and the expressionist makes it purple and the poet writes it "green as an emerald".

Words, words, words! What is awareness?

Chapter IV

If I only knew who I am! Then I could be I. If you knew you, then we could relate as "I Thou" and we would be human. Love me!

Chapter V

Some say that the Ceramic department doesn't know pottery from sculpture. Who can say what is ART? Beauty is a feeling.

This day is sunny. I am awake!

by Marjorie Hellerstein.

Yes, you know all about self-awareness-every tingle of your interior, the sounding of your despair, the question of finishing sleep. Sometimes you try to formulate it for a friend: the strangeness of sitting in a familiar place at an unfamiliar hour, the sound of your voice against the wind, your face in a car window. When you confide your reactions, you try to awaken some awareness in him. Well so that is sharing—of your self, of your precious self. Perhaps if he responds, you become aware of him, perhaps even enough to strain your attention outward.

The awareness of the Other and of the details of life that surround the Other are one measure of your ability to expand and receive, but only one measure, because in making him aware of yourself, you may not separate the Other from yourself. And if you don't? It won't be a good sharing, because the Narcissistic self, who wants to see individual significance in its own reflection, wants to separate the Other from the self and wants to respond separately. Perhaps, then, in striving for a separation of response, you may learn something about attention.

Yes, you are learning all about self-awareness, but are you also aware of straining your attention outward?

by Dr. Bruce Hawthorn

Awareness is not self-preoccupation. Half-educated people with a cause, be it self-expression in Art, Revolution, or Patriotism, are a curse to civilization and order. Without order and structure, men cannot live with each other.

The whole world began, during the 19th century, to explode in knowledge, techniques, and destructive capabilities. Education consists of becoming aware of the complex arrangements between men and societies, becoming aware of the process of civilization, its ideas, values, its problems, and how these problems arose in the first place. One has to be aware of the world, aware of the uses of intellect, aware that almost all our problems are man-made. Most important of all, awareness of the methods of communication and its role in solving problems is the condition of the educated, civilized human being.

by Ronald Hayes

Awareness: is the state of being cognizant and conscious of that which lies without. At one time being aware of what had, what was, or what was about to happen required simply a relatively intelligent, awake, alert and open human being. There wasn't that much going on, communications were slower, knowledge of past happenings was easily acquired and there was time. Man had not learned how fast he could travel, think and communicate.

To be aware of everything past, present and future at this moment in man's development is frustratingly impossible. This can be seen in the amount of specialization which exists in every phase of business and industry. Knowledge in every area has become so vast and continues to expand at such a tremendous rate that men are forced to focus on ever decreasing portions of the whole in order to remain effective.

This presents an almost unsurmountable problem to the artist, for in order to achieve a vital, leading and productive role in society he must rapidly broaden, rather than decrease the focus of his awareness. His stimulus lies in that unending world out there, and to pick a single point of specialization now is regressive. Specialization can exist in other areas because so much current information exists. The artist's knowledge of his trade, however, peaked in the 16th century and has merely been rehashed since then. The artist must first come abreast of this world, and then rushing along with it must direct its future towards the more beautiful and meaningful.

The students of Mass. Art are uniquely aware. They are alive, awake, and cognizant of what is, where it's at, and where it's going. They are conscious of and sensitive to the aesthetic needs of all peoples. But as with most honest creative people, they are most aware of the impotence of their means.

“AWARENESS”

Awareness is having an active knowledge of the nature of things — a sensitivity to vital forces at whatever level of exploration one finds it necessary to pursue. It is to become so involved in the study of a situation (or form) that one is able to define all experience by its relationship to this single situation. It is ultimately a realization of the harmony and unity (oneness) of all things.

Awareness is catching the right vibrations at the right time.

*Arthur Hillman
January 1969*

“Do the students at Massachusetts College of Art have sufficient awareness?”

This question is sufficiently complex so that it can be treated here only in a general manner, and at that, indirectly. For example, there is political, social, cultural, religious, artistic, intellectual, emotional, psychological, scientific, technological, historical, and self-awareness (among others), and these in varying degrees in any one individual. To make a broad generalization is unfair, but some aspects of the question are observable.

The idea of awareness permeates the student's college life; it is what we would like him to have when he enters the college, what we are teaching toward during his stay, and what he will hopefully possess upon graduation.

Most students, fresh from high school, have an awareness of art which is, for the most part, low or non-existent. During his four years here, the student will be led, directed, cajoled, coaxed, advised, pushed, and threatened by

his instructors toward “awareness”, but it is through his own efforts and actions, in areas outside his direct contact with the classroom (library, galleries, museums, art organizations, other students, travel, and especially his own creative work on the outside) that I feel genuine awareness is developed. This does not demean the instructor who must teach with the ultimate goal of making the student independent and self-reliant. It is on the Outside where all the learning and influences are tested, applied, and integrated, and either bear fruit or not. Hopefully, the graduate will leave primarily with a sense of self-awareness: with confidence, identity, and especially, self-motivation.

Many students have the mistaken idea that involvement (awareness) in areas other than their art will somehow dilute its intensity. This is truly a difficult personal problem to resolve. It might be because of this that many student affairs either languish or have so much difficulty in getting started; e.g. student government, newspaper, social action, etc. However, the more exposure, the more broad one's interests, the more fully developed he is as a

human being and as an artist. Today's world demands that the artist possess a far greater range of awareness than ever before.

The student can't be fully blamed for lack of awareness; his problems are the College's, and the College's problems are unavoidably his. Courses are still unavailable which today are vitally necessary as a foundation for many of the areas of awareness listed above. The question is then turned inward and becomes: “Is the College sufficiently aware?” There is no doubt that it is moving toward revision and change based on an awakened awareness of its past inertia and a heightened awareness of its responsibilities to the student.

The interaction of institution and student body is most effective when each challenges the other. But, this will require greater effort on both sides. Or is this what we mean by “awareness”?

Edward Movitz
Asst. Prof.

Awareness is deceptively concise in definition. Daniel Webster says that to be Aware is to be “apprised; cognizant; informed; conscious”. Awareness in connotation is easily ignored. Both students and teachers seem to regard it as another prize (?) in the Grab Bag of Readimade Academic Expressions for all (intellectual) Occasions. Awareness as a conception is a gordian knot-like enigma. Explorations of it reveal few answers, more questions.

Awareness, in kind and quantity, depends on the individual. Have we, then, the right to hope for an increase of it on a collective level? Mass. Art has a pitifully low degree of Awareness, by any definition, connotation, or conception of the term. When many of the male students say they would leave the school were it not for the Draft, and the female students claim they are only here for the degree (though their day-to-day activities indicate a concentration on a sort of four year Sadie Hawkins program), and the teacher/artists say they'd be full time artists were it not for the salary, something is radically wrong in the school. Those who genuinely care about the vital, organic give and take of the learning process (the living process) have left school to subject themselves to the Cruel World Beyond Mass. Art, as opposed to the Lethargic World Within Mass. Art (Cruelty, at least, can teach, and demands involvement.) Lethargy only breeds incestuously. Unless something is done, the school will have a student body made up of cowards and dull, flirtatious potential spinsters, all wallowing in a Walter Mitty illusion that they are buying, with a minimum of money and mental effort, four years that will somehow turn them from pupae to Artists, or at the very least, will shelter them for that amount of time. Perhaps there will be one or two who feel missionary-prone for the day, and they'll join a committee as proof that at least they are Involved.

No doubt the word Awareness is an inadequate catch-all. (Words only vaguely approach true communication.) But the situation is crucial. The school's stagnant learning process is turning away its most valuable people, if not in body, at least in spirit. A vicious circle exists where there should be an upward spiral. And if by trying to probe a word like Awareness one of the usually corpse-like students or teachers is seduced into experiencing one one-hundredth of the actual meaning of the word, it is a worthwhile thing for him to have done.

ROB MOORE AND CAL FILBIN CHEW THE SUBJECT

. You've asked me about student awareness and I wonder why you ask me . It would seem that the person you would ask would be a student.

Well, we can't ask the students because they're not aware, you know?

Am I supposed to point out how unaware they are?

That's your job, you know. . .that's your job .

I see—I thought I was going to have to reflect back to the days when I was a student. . .that gets way out of proportion and is hardly relevant. I am aware of—woops, bad word—I am cognizant (how's that for a word?) of a lack of awareness on the part of the student. . .but I think it would be very interesting to hear from students what they think awareness is, it's a word one hears so often.

Yup, it would be. Then after you heard all that, maybe you could say something.

Well, I'll say something anyway. . .I think it's the wrong word—awareness. . .student awareness—the wrong two words, how's that?

Great, great—

Every student's aware of Andy Warhol, right?

Right.

So what.

I know, “so what.”

Every student is not only aware of Andy Warhol, but is allowed to do some of the things he's doing because of Andy Warhol, right?

Right.

So what.

I know, “so what.”

We all know Andy Warhol, but what do we feel about him? I felt indifferent once, I still feel somewhat indifferent—but I know why . Do you know why?

I feel indifferent to Andy Warhol because he really doesn't make any difference to me....what I do...right now, anyway. He may later, and he may not because I might not go that way. . .in fact, sometimes I hate him, and I hate Frank Stella, and I hate everybody else I'm supposed to know about.

Do you hate them because you know them, or do you hate them because you don't know them?

I hate them because I DO know them and I can't—

Too well?

No, no. Knowing them isn't enough. . .Actually I don't really hate them. I hate them when they're shoved down my throat. You know? I hate to feel obligated to them, but I can ignore them.

That's good! You can ignore them! I feel so many students can't, can't ignore. They're supposed to love, not hate; they can't love, they do hate. But their reasons for hating, there are none.

Uh huh.

This is the dilemma.

EXPLAIN IT.

We're using the word AWARENESS so often. To become aware: the word aware might be made synonymous with the word 'love.' We're asking the students to become aware, to love what they are doing. But with no understanding of that which they are asked to love, how can they become aware? Andy Warhol loves what he is doing. . .Andy Warhol is aware of what he is doing. The student is aware, to overuse this word, of Andy Warhol; but he is unaware of what Andy Warhol is doing, he is unaware of Andy Warhol's AWARENESS, again synonymous to love. Andy Warhol's love. And so this brings us to the big question I feel, which is this: How does one love Andy Warhol? Or perhaps that's unfair, perhaps it should be: How does one understand Andy Warhol's love? How does one's awareness begin to parallel Andy Warhol's awareness: I really don't think it's enough to ask the student to be aware, to look, to see, to experience. . .those are simple words , it means NOTHING! They do what we tell them to do, as an instructor I say this. I ask a student to look at a show, and I wonder why, why do it? I've given them nothing to look at the show with. This is the artist-instructor's dilemma: what can one give the student to make him self-aware? The student simply isn't going to respond to an exhibition through four patent problems he has been handed during the semester. I am afraid this means we are avoiding the problem of True Awareness. Do you think Mass. Art is designed to make the students aware?

I don't think any place is designed to make anyone aware. I think there comes a point, when you're asked to go out and become aware, and fall in love with Andy Warhol, and fall in love with all those other people. . . when the teacher no longer has anything to give you—That your awareness from then on depends on yourself , and the impact these people have on you is something that is determined only by you. You can go out and experience so many paintings, so many exhibitions, and be aware of the fact that they exist, that the people who created them exist; but then, something else has to happen after that—you can fall in love with the work, you can fall in love with the love which the creator has for the work—but that has nothing to do with YOU.

Well, that brings us right back to this dilemma I am in as an instructor: How do I bring to the student that identification with the artist he is seeing— a self-identification. . .a valid reason for rejecting, a valid reason for loving. What is one to do as an instructor? Where does student awareness start?. . .that 'beginning,' Cal, that's the thing I don't understand. This is the thing that it's so difficult to start a student on: to BEGIN to be himself in relation to what's occurring.

But you don't have anything to do with that. That's when the student comes in, that's when real awareness begins: when the student discovers that Andy Warhol's love for what he's doing is something we're all about. That what any artist you happen to see feels, is something they have acquired, grown into—it's real for them because they fit themselves, and everything that they feel, that they know, that they do, they fit it in, TOGETHER, and they make a whole out of it.

But how does a student, right out of high school, bogged down with convention, bogged down with his Irish background, face these facts? You speak fact, you're talking right, you're absolutely right. But to become aware, I'm afraid, means divorcing one's self from his background and environment for a while. Becoming aware of Andy Warhol, do you know what that requires? That means understanding not your own environment any longer, that means being someone else for a moment, an objective self. It's the Beginning I'm interested in. Once a student begins to feel and sense a thing in relation to himself, he's on his own, he's on his way. And I must confess as an instructor I feel I have a place there. . .once he has become aware, he's no longer a student actually, he's in my position; we are two aware people talking.

It's all getting to sound a bit ominous. We're getting far too serious, Cal. Right now, having just gotten back from New York, and having had some experiences there, I'm going to launch into a small anecdote. Last Saturday night I went to see Ingmar Bergman's new film Shame . Quite frankly, recently I have become bored with the obtuse films of Ingmar Bergman. I've felt deprived of what the man is talking about. Nonetheless, I have so much respect for his earlier films that I have become a devotee of his—and any new film of Bergman's I always to to see. Let me simply say that I left the theater overwhelmed with the feeling of having seen something great, something truly personal. . . . It instilled in me a real sense of life. Bergman remains an individual creator, a personal creator, and refuses to succumb to the art form film has become. Film has become less art— Bergman remains an artist. Ingmar Bergman's film was one of the greatest experiences I have ever had. The next day I went to the Whitney Museum to see the Annual Exhibition of American Sculpture. Having just had this peak experience, quote unquote, the night before, I was excited, and anticipating an equally gratifying experience when I went into the Whitney. To be brief, I was disappointed, disheartened, disillusioned. The emptiness of the museum was overwhelming. The show had over 100 works by prominent and lesser-known artists. I was ashamed to discover how empty, how lacking in thought and idea Art has become. It reflects to me the falseness of the word 'awareness.' The show represented the student who has become professional, the professional who has never been a student. The majority of works in the show were nothing more than magnifications of freshman problems 101A. They all reflected an awareness, but certainly not Self Awareness. I've made this statement much too general, there were some magnificent pieces in the show, maybe 8 or 10. But the bulk of the show was discouragingly vapid. The majority of the artists were able to create in their own time that which they felt was relevant, but they have failed to make the object they created relevant to THEMSELVES.